

# FINNISH FOREIGN POLICY PAPERS

# 03

Teemu Palosaari

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## NEITHER NEUTRAL NOR NON-ALIGNED

## The Europeanization of Finland's foreign and security policy



ULKOPOLIITTINEN INSTITUUTTI  
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# NEITHER NEUTRAL NOR NON-ALIGNED:

## The Europeanization of Finland's foreign and security policy

by Teemu Palosaari

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## INTRODUCTION

*“The EU membership strengthens the foundations of Finnish security. (...) As a small country we have to adapt, but we also wish to influence. That is the key question in our security policy currently.”*

Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen, 6.6.1995

Since Finland's EU accession in 1995, the EU's foreign, security and defence policies have undergone significant development. The first EU military operation was launched ten years ago (EUFOR Concordia in Macedonia, 2003), and since then operations have been carried out in DR Congo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad and the Central African Republic, and the coast of Somalia. Civilian crisis management missions have taken place, for instance, in Macedonia, Palestinian territories, Georgia, Aceh, Iraq, Sudan/Darfur, DR Congo, and Kosovo. The EU battle groups were subsequently established in 2007. The EU institutional structure managing these policies has also morphed, and now includes various units, committees, groups and planning cells.

The present paper analyzes the Europeanization of Finnish foreign and security policy, that is to say how Finland has adapted to the EU and its common foreign, security and defence policy. It also examines the ways in which Finland has tried to influence these European policies and what the outcome of these attempts has been. In other words, it discusses how the alleged key questions of Finnish security policy – “adaptation and the wish to influence” – have been realized. The main emphasis is placed on the tensions between non-alignment and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) on the one hand, and the impact of EU crisis management operations and battle groups on Finnish peacekeeping policy on the other.

A key argument is that participation in the EU's foreign, security and defence policies has played a significant role in a number of transformations in the Finnish policy. These include changes for instance in the national position on the use of military force abroad (the rules of peace-keeping/military crisis management), in the interpretation of non-alignment, and the division of power among the primary national foreign policy decision-makers, namely the President and the Prime Minister/Council of State, and also the Parliament. Furthermore, it is suggested that participation in the EU's foreign, security and defence policies has come to represent not only a tool for responding to the changes in the international security environment, but also a means of self-identification for

Finland. Consequently, EU membership has transformed the ideational roots of Finnish foreign and security policy.

Compared to the vast majority of other EU member states, the Finnish starting points for the Europeanization process are quite exceptional. Issues such as the tradition of neutrality policy, military non-alignment and non-NATO membership set Finland apart from the European mainstream. Consequently, questions concerning the EU's defence policy, for instance, have carried completely different weight in the Finnish debate compared to most of the other countries.

Indeed, there are a number of factors that increase Finland's vulnerability to Europeanization. First of all, it is apparent that there has been a general responsive tendency – a pursuit of a place at the “core” of the Union – in Finland's policy towards the EU. Particularly during the early years of Finnish membership, “the Finnish government was consciously trying to move from the periphery to the core in order to maximize its political influence”.<sup>1</sup> This so-called *Musterknabe* attitude, being a model pupil, is often used to describe early Finnish EU policy.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, the Finnish emphasis on efficiency in all EU actions has implied “open-mindedness toward qualified majority voting in foreign and security policy even in matters other than implementation, and even toward application of flexibility or enhanced cooperation in security and defence policy cooperation”.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, Finnish public opinion has been positive with regard to European security and defence policy. Raunio and Tiilikainen note that “[w]hen it comes to ESDP, it would seem that Finnish people in general support it even more than the politicians”.<sup>4</sup> Security policy played a role in the Finnish population's positive perceptions of the EU accession: many Finns expected that EU membership would increase Finland's security – military security included.<sup>5</sup>

1 Ojanen 2007, 36; also Antola 1999, Forsberg 2001, Tiilikainen 2006, 213.

2 See Mouritzen 1993.

3 Ranta & Vierros-Villeneuve 2006, 305–306.

4 Raunio & Tiilikainen 2003, 135.

5 Hokkanen 1996, 7.

Since then, the public opinion surveys conducted by the Advisory Board of Defence Information have year on year (1996–2012) indicated that most Finns see EU membership as the key factor contributing to the strengthening of Finnish security. The surveys show that Finnish public opinion has remained positive towards the EU's foreign, security and defence policies.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, a small-state aspect can be added to the list: the question of small states' vulnerability to the impact of European integration, as well as the question of their ability to influence European policies are particularly relevant for Finland.

This paper is based on a doctoral thesis titled *The Art of Adaptation: A Study on the Europeanization of Finland's Foreign and Security Policy*, University of Helsinki.<sup>7</sup> The findings and conclusions presented here are based on the analysis of key foreign and security policy documents: Government Reports on security and/or defence policy (1995, 1997, 2001, 2004, 2009, 2012) and related speeches by key decision-makers; legislative amendments or new laws (Government proposals) concerning foreign and security policy, and particularly participation in peacekeeping and crisis management operations (e.g. peacekeeping/military crisis management legislation of 1995, 2000, 2005, 2006; decisions to place a military contingent on a high state of readiness as part of the EU's battle group 2007, 2010); Government material stemming from the national preparation for EU intergovernmental conferences, as well as reactions to the development of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).

In order to provide a richer picture of the national discourse, this material is supplemented with the related parliamentary debate (political discussion in the plenary sessions), and statements and reports by the Parliamentary Committees (Foreign Affairs Committee, Defence Committee, Constitutional Law Committee and Grand Committee).

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6 Maanpuolustustiedotuksen suunnittelukunta 2012.

7 Palosaari 2011.

# I NEUTRALITY AND ACCESSION TO THE EU



Finland joined the European Union in the first wave of post-Cold War enlargement in 1995. All the applicants – including the neutral countries, Austria, Finland and Sweden – had to accept and be able to implement the Union's common foreign and security policy. This criterion was implicitly aimed at the aforementioned neutral applicants. Before the accession, the Commission deemed that Finland's policy of neutrality – “or what is left of it” as the report put it – could pose problems for the Union: “in respect of the common foreign and security policy, the question arises to what extent Finland, which, as an armed neutral, has always laid great emphasis on the capability of defending the national territory, can fully share some of its objectives, such as the safeguarding of the independence and security of the Union (Article J.4)”.<sup>8</sup>

During the accession negotiations, the Commission called for further confirmation and specific and binding assurances with regard to Finland's political commitment and legal capacity to fulfil the obligations of the common foreign and security policy. This was needed “in order to be satisfied that this would not hamper the possible evolution in time of a common European defence”.<sup>9</sup> Eventually, Finland, together with the three other countries applying for EU membership at the same time (Sweden, Norway and Austria), issued a declaration in which it committed to the CFSP without any national preconditions or constraints (Joint Declaration on Common Foreign and Security Policy 21.12.1993). The declaration is also included in the accession agreement. When Finland joined the EU, the official national interpretation was that Finnish military non-alignment and the CFSP do not contradict each other.<sup>10</sup>

The dominant Finnish perception after accession was that the EU is a security community where solidarity and reciprocity among the members strengthen the security of each. Yet, the role of the EU as a security policy actor on a practical level was regarded as rather limited and the significance attached to the CFSP and its instruments was modest. It was

considered that in the building process of the new European security system, organizations such as the OSCE, WEU and NATO play a more decisive role than the EU. According to Government Report 1/1995, the EU's security policy significance to Finland actually depended on Finland's own activity and contribution: the EU offered new opportunities to influence change in the security environment and its stability. EU membership was regarded as a tool for both advancing national interests and contributing to the broader international security landscape.<sup>11</sup> When it came to military security, the Government noted that it remains Finland's own responsibility but that EU membership “will help Finland to repel any military threats and prevent attempts to exert political pressure”<sup>12</sup> – even without any particular military security clause in the EU treaties. This view was widely shared in the domestic debate as the following extract from a parliamentary speech illustrates:

“Any actor threatening Finland has to take into consideration that Finland is in a union with a community of 350 million inhabitants and that the EU does not accept the intimidation of any one of its member states.”<sup>13</sup>

Although the EU accession called for a reinterpretation of neutrality/non-alignment, the deeper international transformation processes were the principal causes of the change in Finnish policy at that stage. The downgrading of neutrality had actually started as early as the beginning of the 1990s. After the end of the Cold War, the traditional neutrality between East and West had ceased to be an option. The commitment to the CFSP was chiefly seen as an instrument in implementing the adaptation to the new international security environment. Thus, despite the CFSP and the declared commitment to it, official documentation and domestic debate stressed non-alignment as a continuing key element of Finnish foreign and security policy. In a similar vein, the aspects of the CFSP

8 European Commission 1992, 22.

9 European Commission 1992, 23.

10 Government Report 1/1995, 39.

11 Prime Minister Lipponen 6.6.1995, preliminary debate on the Government Report 1/1995;

Government Report 1/1995, 40.

12 Government Report 1/1995, 39.

13 MP Ihamäki 6.6.1995, preliminary debate on Government Report 1/1995.



that were regarded as most convenient from a national viewpoint were emphasized. The CFSP's aims were seen to lie in general issues such as peace, security and the promotion of human rights. The Government underlined that the CFSP did not imply a need to alter bilateral relations, that the responsibility for defence would remain national, and that independent national decision-making was still possible.<sup>14</sup>

Thanks to the still embryonic state of the CFSP in the 1990s, it was possible to argue that the CFSP only complemented the national policy and did not come into conflict with it. This greatly reduced the urgency to radically Europeanize national foreign and security policy. Likewise, the parliamentary debates reveal no significant importance of the EU's security institutions in the minds of national decision-makers. At that point, the idea of a common European defence policy, EU crisis management operations and battle groups seemed farfetched to Finns. EU membership and the supportive stance on the CFSP functioned as instruments to convince the international community that the reorientation of Finnish foreign and security policy was genuine and permanent. Tellingly, in the parliamentary debate on Government Report 1/1995, many MPs underlined that the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union (the FCMA Treaty) no longer defined the international role and identity of Finland. It was replaced by EU membership, European values, non-alignment and independent defence.<sup>15</sup>

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14 Government Report 2/1991, Government Report 1/1995.

15 E.g. MP Penttilä, MP Salolainen 31.10.1995, follow-up debate on Government Report 1/1995.

## **II**

### **THE CFSP MEETS NON-ALIGNMENT**

In the late 1990s, the deepening integration in the sphere of foreign and security policy challenged some of the key concepts of Finland's foreign and security policy. Considerable progress in terms of capacities and institutional build-up was made in EU foreign policy. The EU was given the competence to deploy military resources in crisis management. The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)<sup>16</sup> was launched and the first steps were taken to enhance military capabilities for the purposes of the ESDP.

Consequently, there was a growing understanding that Finland had arrived at a crossroads and had to "choose whether it will follow the European mainstream in security or opt out partially or fully from the European security policy cooperation".<sup>17</sup> Finland had to adopt a more consistent and committed stance on EU security and defence policy and decide on the means by which it would participate in its development. Furthermore, Finland was impelled to reconsider the compatibility of military non-alignment and EU defence cooperation, since the question of the EU's defence dimension was on the EU's intergovernmental conference agenda in 1996. In addition, the Kosovo crisis, NATO and EU enlargements, and the rearrangement of NATO-Russia relations posed challenges to Finnish foreign and security policy-making.

The new European framework for foreign and security policy-making was increasingly taken on board. The next Government Report on security policy (titled "European Security Development and Finnish Defence", 1997) focused more on Europe than on the general post-Cold War security environment. The significance of the EU for Finnish security policy was officially stated more explicitly than before. The three basic factors in Finnish security policy were presented as "military non-alliance, an independent defence and membership of the European Union".<sup>18</sup> The increased prominence given to the EU in Finland's security policy was also visible in that

the rejection of neutrality in Finland's foreign and security policy on the grounds of Finland's EU membership was expressed more clearly: "as a member of the EU, Finland cannot be impartial in a conflict between the EU and a third party".<sup>19</sup> The Government stated that neutrality was not an appropriate term to define the Finnish policy. This was because as an active participant in the CFSP, Finland, together with the other EU member states, is jointly responsible for the status and security of the EU. The Government announced that "Finland supports the strengthening of the EU's effectiveness in foreign and security policy capacity and is participating constructively in the development of the Union's security and defence dimension".<sup>20</sup> Nationally, this was justified by emphasizing that Finland can participate in CFSP development and its implementation without compromising military non-alignment.

Yet, the Government's position on the CFSP was criticized in the parliamentary debate. It was considered, for instance, that creating a crisis management capacity for the EU in practice means establishing an organization which can also implement common defence – which, in turn, was considered problematic for non-aligned Finland. Therefore a typical critical conclusion was that "No military capacity of any kind should be created for the EU, not even in the sense of the so-called crisis management mentioned in the report".<sup>21</sup> Reacting to this, the Foreign Minister reminded parliament about "what has been agreed upon when Finland joined the EU" and how the Maastricht Treaty (and its Articles on the eventual framing of common defence) bind Finland. Referring to the lack of any opt-outs, the Foreign Minister noted that "the Maastricht Treaty has a totally different status for Finland than for Denmark or the UK".<sup>22</sup>

16 The ESDP was renamed the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in the Treaty of Lisbon.

17 MP Kallis 17.3.1997, preliminary debate on Government Report 1/1997.

18 Government Report 1/1997, 47.

19 Government Report 1/1997, 48.

20 Government Report 1/1997, 6.

21 MP Korkeaoja, 18.3.1997, preliminary debate on Government Report 1/1997.

22 Foreign Minister Halonen, 18.3.1997, preliminary debate on Government Report 1/1997. Denmark's opt-outs concern EMU, the ESDP, Justice and Home Affairs and citizenship of the EU; the UK's opt-outs concern EMU and the Schengen Agreement.

This debate shows how the interplay between domestic and European expectations was increasing. As a result, merely adapting to the CFSP was complemented by growing efforts to influence the development of its defence dimension so that it would not pose problems for Finnish non-alignment.

Europeanization can actually occur in two directions: top-down national adaptation, and bottom-up national projection. In addition to the adaptation of national policies, the member states can promote and export nationally defined policy models, ideas, goals and interests to the EU level. This means that a member state can push for its national foreign policy goals to be adopted as EU goals or policies. If such “uploading” is successful, it might lead to the emergence of new policies or structures at the EU level.<sup>23</sup> This aspect of Europeanization has been particularly visible in the Finnish case when EU defence policy has been on the agenda at EU Intergovernmental Conferences. As will be explained below, Finland has invoked its non-alignment, joined forces with other neutral or non-aligned EU member states, and made attempts to influence the direction of EU defence policy so as not to compromise its status as a militarily non-aligned country. The outcomes of Finland’s attempts to project its national goals have varied, however.

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<sup>23</sup> Wong 2006; Palosaari 2011, 34.

**III**  
**EU DEFENCE POLICY AND MILITARY**  
**NON-ALIGNMENT**

The reconfiguration of the relationship between the EU and WEU was on the EU agenda in the late 1990s, and France, Germany, the Benelux countries, Italy and Spain proposed a full merger of these organizations. This would have meant importing the WEU security guarantee clause into the EU treaties. Moreover, it was proposed that the forthcoming Amsterdam Treaty would include a more precise reference to the aim of common defence and that the crisis management tasks would be mentioned as the first stage in the development of a common defence.

The non-aligned countries opposed the proposal. In order not to compromise their status as militarily non-aligned countries, they wanted to keep common defence out of the EU.<sup>24</sup> To this end, they tried to direct the European discussions on the EU's defence policy towards crisis management instead of mutual security guarantees and other similar issues that were considered difficult to dovetail with their national policies and foreign and security policy traditions.<sup>25</sup>

Together with Sweden, Finland proposed a compromise which consisted of the inclusion of the Petersberg tasks<sup>26</sup> in the Amsterdam Treaty and the CFSP. In this way, instead of merging WEU with the EU, WEU would become an EU instrument for carrying out military crisis management operations. Finland and Sweden's initiative (The IGC and the Security and Defence Dimension: Towards an Enhanced EU Role in Crisis Management. Memorandum from Finland and Sweden, 25 April 1996) proposed that humanitarian and crisis management tasks in which military organizations are used would be added to the EU's competences.<sup>27</sup> The memorandum was adopted, and the Petersberg tasks were transferred to the EU, but WEU's territorial defence mission fell outside the arrangement as Finland and Sweden had wished. Military crisis management tasks were included

in the EU's competences in the Amsterdam Treaty and crisis management became part of the CFSP.<sup>28</sup>

The "uploading" of national goals was successful in the sense that a line between crisis management and defence was drawn, and the worst scenario for Finland – the merger of WEU with the EU, and the incorporation of the WEU defence clause into the EU treaties – was not realized. Thus it was possible for Finland to argue that the development of the EU's defence dimension actually meant strengthening crisis management and peacekeeping activities. With defence taken out of the defence dimension, the CFSP was more suited to Finland's self-image as a non-aligned country with a tradition of peacekeeping. Additionally, it implied that Finland was able to participate fully in the CFSP. Indeed, the initiative was also presented as evidence of Finland's readiness to participate constructively in the EU's security cooperation.<sup>29</sup>

However, Finland and Sweden did not achieve all of their goals with their joint initiative. The EU's Petersberg task list was eventually formed on the basis of the WEU's Petersberg declaration, and thus included more far-reaching capacities than those included in the Finnish-Swedish initiative. The Amsterdam Treaty refers to the "tasks of combat forces in crisis management including peace-making" instead of "crisis management", as proposed by Finland and Sweden.<sup>30</sup> Thus the initiative was only partially successful. It failed to limit crisis management to something short of peace enforcement.<sup>31</sup>

There were also some unintended side effects that were out of line with the original aims of the Finnish-Swedish initiative: At the EU level, the initiative, together with the inclusion of the Petersberg tasks, was followed by a surprisingly rapid development of the European security and defence policy. After the signing of the Amsterdam Treaty, a common understanding between France and the UK was achieved in St. Malo in 1998, which

24 Ojanen 2007, 36.

25 Tiilikainen 2007, 178.

26 The Petersberg tasks comprise humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks carried out by combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making.

27 Government Report 1/1997, 17.

28 Sjursen 1998, 107; Tiilikainen 2007, 178.

29 Prime Minister Lipponen 17.3.1997, preliminary debate on Government Report 1/1997.

30 Tiilikainen 2007, 178–179.

31 Haukkala & Ojanen 2011.

added momentum to the EU security and defence policy. Consequently, Finland became inextricably entangled in deepening integration in the area of security and defence policy. What enhanced that effect was that many of the decisions on ESDP development coincided with the Finnish EU Council presidency in the latter half of 1999. As a result, the task of continuing the development of EU military crisis management fell to Finland during its presidency. To this end, the aim concerning the military capacities came to be known as the Helsinki Headline Goal.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> It implied that in terms of military capabilities the EU should be able, by the year 2003, to deploy within sixty days, and sustain for at least one year, a rapid reaction force of up to 60,000 persons.



## **IV**

### **EU SECURITY GUARANTEES AND NON-ALIGNMENT**

The development of the common security and defence policy was back on the Intergovernmental Conference agenda again in 2003–2004. The European Convention on the future of the European Union (2002–2003) drew up a proposal for a European Constitution that served as a starting point for the Intergovernmental Conference. The proposal contained a solidarity clause and a mutual defence clause.

Finland convened a meeting with the other non-aligned countries, Austria, Ireland and Sweden, to formulate a common stand on the issue. They objected to the so-called structural cooperation and a mutual defence clause within the EU and proposed a less automatic and more voluntary formulation for the common defence clause: “If a member state is a victim of armed aggression, it may request that the other member states give it aid and assistance by all the means in their power, military or other, in accordance with Art. 51 of the U.N. Charter”.<sup>33</sup> The four foreign ministers stated that “provisions containing formal binding security guarantees would be inconsistent with our security policy or with our constitutional requirements”.<sup>34</sup>

The Finnish Government Report on the outcome of the work of the European Convention and on preparations for the Intergovernmental Conference (Government Report 2/2003) found that writing the common defence clause into the Constitutional Treaty was not in the Finnish interest. This view was supported by the Foreign Affairs Committee, which noted that the mutual defence clause would mean incorporating an element that is typical of defence alliances into the EU.<sup>35</sup> This argument was also put forward in the parliamentary debate.<sup>36</sup> A number of MPs pointed to the perceived incompatibility of mutual defence and military non-alignment. In their view, Finland’s response should build on Finland’s non-alignment and the country

should act together with Sweden and the other non-aligned member states.<sup>37</sup>

However, the non-aligned countries’ proposal was not accepted in the Intergovernmental Conference. Instead, the Treaty text came to state that the member states had an obligation to provide aid and assistance by all the means in their power, and included a reference that can be seen to point to the neutral and non-aligned countries: “this shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States” (Article I-41, paragraph 7).<sup>38</sup> Eventually, the security and defence policy development included in the Constitutional Treaty was welcomed in Finland by the Government, the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Defence Committee. They emphasized in the domestic debate that the EU is not a military alliance but rather “a unique international actor” possessing a wide range of tools for tackling the current new security threats.<sup>39</sup> The Defence Committee shared the Government’s view inasmuch as it considered that the EU could not be regarded as a military alliance, since no decision had been made concerning the EU member states entering into common defence.<sup>40</sup>

Yet, the parliamentary debate questioned how the solidarity clause and the mutual defence clause would affect Finland’s non-alignment.<sup>41</sup> Finally, parliament voted on the interpretation of Finnish non-alignment. In contrast to the Government Report, the main opposition party (the National Coalition Party, *Kokoomus*) proposed that since Finland is committed to the EU and the solidarity clause and security guarantees, Finland cannot be considered a militarily non-aligned country in the traditional sense. 42 MPs supported the proposal, while 149 voted against it and

33 Letter by Austria, Ireland, Finland and Sweden to the IGC, 5 December 2003. Emphasis added.

34 Letter by Austria, Ireland, Finland and Sweden to the IGC of 5 December.

35 Foreign Affairs Committee Report 4/2003.

36 MP Siimes 1.10.2003, follow-up debate on Government Report 2/2003, Foreign Affairs Committee Report 4/2003.

37 E.g. MP Kauppila 3.9.2003, preliminary debate on Government Report 2/2003.

38 Van Eekelen 2006, 170; Ojanen 2007 37–38.

39 Prime Minister Vanhanen 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004.

40 Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 20; see also e.g. MP Lankia 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004.

41 Foreign Affairs Committee Statement 4/2004, 11; MP Katainen 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004, Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 20.

thus supported the Government Report and its interpretation of non-alignment (Plenary session of parliament 21.12.2004).

However, the Government's interpretation also implied a reconstructed non-alignment concept. The Government stated that Finland maintains and develops its defence capability as a militarily non-allied country and monitors the changes in its security environment.<sup>42</sup> Thus the definition of non-alignment became narrower – the term referred only to the way in which Finland organizes its defence: “Finland is not a member of any military alliance, and thus develops its own national defence as a non-aligned country”.<sup>43</sup>

The Prime Minister emphasized that military non-alignment did not describe Finnish foreign policy in any broader sense than that.<sup>44</sup> The Foreign Minister added that military non-alignment was “merely a technical statement, not a manifesto”.<sup>45</sup> As an MP summarized in the parliamentary debate, the view was that since Finland is not a member of NATO, this makes Finland militarily non-aligned, whereas EU membership implies that Finland is politically and economically aligned.<sup>46</sup> The new definition of non-alignment can be taken as a clear indicator of Europeanization. It is a question of the relaxation of national policy positions in order to accommodate the progress of the EU policy and institutions.

In the end, the outcomes of both of the above-described cases, in which Finland tried to upload its goals to the EU, show that national projection is not fully steerable and might result in unexpected and even unwanted results. This might be a feature that concerns only the small member states, but what perhaps speaks in favour of the generalization of this finding is that in both cases Finland worked together with a group of member states. Despite the unintended

outcomes, however, the Petersberg tasks are generally remembered as a positive sign of Finland's activism in EU crisis management policy. In some other, less defence-policy-oriented CFSP issues, Finnish uploading has been more successful: the Northern Dimension is often presented as a prime example of the effective exporting of Finnish foreign policy goals to the EU. Currently, peace mediation and Arctic policies are issues in which there are signs of Finnish attempts at the projection of nationally defined policy ideas to the EU level.<sup>47</sup>

As a result of these European and domestic changes and debates, the CFSP became a more internalized element of the national discourse. Concepts like “European values” and “the common European value base” were put forward in the domestic debate as factors from which the goals of Finnish foreign and security policy can be derived. At the same time, the perceived overall security policy significance of the EU for Finland has grown. A strengthening view has emerged in both the official documentation and the parliamentary debate according to which, firstly, the deepening of integration within the EU has increased the stability of Finland's environs. Secondly, it is seen that in the changing global environment, security threats extend beyond national borders and Finland has become more vulnerable to the “new” security threats than before. The EU is now regarded as being capable of tackling such threats better than any other international organization. In this respect, Finnish non-alignment has been effectively Europeanized. Finland no longer finds itself impartial, but part of the European “we”.

The Europeanization trend is also evident in the 2009 and 2012 Government Reports on security and defence policy, and the related parliamentary debates. The latest Government Report states that it is important for Finland that the EU retains its role in preserving stability in Europe and its significance as a security community.<sup>48</sup> Membership of the EU is designated “a fundamental security

42 Government Report 6/2004.

43 Prime Minister Vanhanen 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on Government Report 6/2004.

44 Prime Minister Vanhanen 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004.

45 Foreign Minister Tuomioja 29.9.2004, preliminary debate on Government Report 6/2004.

46 MP Ranta-Muotio 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004.

47 See Government Report 6/2012, 82; Finland's Arctic Strategy 2010, 46–48.

48 Government Report 6/2012, 12.

policy choice for Finland”.<sup>49</sup> The Prime Minister has noted that the development of the EU’s common security and defence policy has advanced at a slower pace than expected, yet there is a greater need for it than before.<sup>50</sup> According to the Foreign Minister, Finland is committed to the development of the EU security and defence policy.<sup>51</sup> The Government Report finds that the Lisbon Treaty has advanced the common security and defence policy and that political commitment to the development of capacity cooperation has increased.<sup>52</sup> Further national adaptation in the form of changes to the Finnish legislation is likely to take place in the near future. The Government Report also states that both the solidarity clause (concerning terrorist attacks and natural and man-made catastrophes) and the mutual assistance clause (concerning armed attacks) in the Lisbon Treaty call for changes to the Finnish legislation.<sup>53</sup> Both obligations are seen as advancing Finland’s security<sup>54</sup>, although their functioning in practice is in some cases called into question in the parliamentary debate.<sup>55</sup>

It can be concluded that a comprehensive reassessment and eventual redefinition of the nature of Finnish non-alignment due to deepening European integration has taken place. The Finnish interpretation of non-alignment has been made compatible with the CSDP, and further adaptation is set to occur as Finland has declared its commitment to the development of a more effective common security and defence policy.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, Finland advocates the development of a common security and defence policy which will “facilitate the ability to receive and provide assistance”.<sup>57</sup> However, the adaptational pressure exerted by the defence dimension of the CSDP has been far from unambiguous

to date. The unclear status of EU defence policy has left room for national interpretation. This has made it possible for Finland to gradually redefine the meaning of military non-alignment. Currently, the official policy documents take the line that “Finland is not a member of a military alliance”.<sup>58</sup>

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49 *ibid.*, 76.

50 Prime Minister Katainen 6.2.2013, preliminary debate on Government Report 6/2012.

51 Foreign Minister Tuomioja 6.2.2013, preliminary debate on Government Report 6/2012.

52 Government Report 6/2012, 57.

53 Government Report 6/2012, 89–90.

54 Government Report 1/2009, 65.

55 E.g. MP Nepponen, MP Kanerva 16.6.2009, follow-up debate on Government Report 1/2009.

56 Government Report 6/2012, 78.

57 *ibid.*, 90.

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58 E.g. Government Report 6/2012, 78.

# **V**

## **EU OPERATIONS AND BATTLE GROUPS: FROM PEACEKEEPING TO MILITARY CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

The Finnish peacekeeping legislation has been amended four times since EU accession in 1995, and currently refers to crisis management instead of peacekeeping in its title. The restrictions concerning the rules of engagement and the need for a United Nations mandate have been loosened. The transition from conventional peacekeeping towards military crisis management began in the context of Finnish participation in the NATO-led operations of IFOR, SFOR and KFOR in the Balkans in the 1990s.<sup>59</sup> The EU military crisis management operations started with the Concordia operation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in March 2003. Finland also participated in the Althea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2004.<sup>60</sup>

In the parliamentary debate, these operations were perceived as a sign and example of new and deeper cooperation in EU security and defence policy. As it was understood that Concordia would be followed by other EU crisis management operations, a view gaining ground was that amending the national peacekeeping legislation was inevitable. Additional pressure in that direction was exerted by the plans concerning the EU battle groups – it was decided that Finland would take part in two battle groups in 2007 and 2008.<sup>61</sup>

Both the EU crisis management operations and the battle groups were a significant source of Europeanization. The Prime Minister drew a clear connection between EU crisis management and the battle groups and the need to amend Finnish peacekeeping legislation so that Finland could participate in them.<sup>62</sup> This argumentation was widely employed in different official documentation related to the legislation process<sup>63</sup>, and

EU crisis management was also frequently presented in the parliamentary debate as the main reason for amending the peacekeeping legislation.<sup>64</sup> It was also considered that since “military crisis management” as a term describes the EU’s crisis management tasks better than the term “peacekeeping”, it makes sense to change the title of the Finnish law so that instead of peacekeeping it refers to military crisis management (the official title being Act on Military Crisis Management).<sup>65</sup>

The definition of crisis management relies heavily on the definitions provided by the EU. The Defence Committee, for instance, finds that the EU possesses unique civil and military capabilities for intervening in crises.<sup>66</sup> The EU policies clearly influence the way peacekeeping was reconceptualized. A typical conclusion was that the Finnish approach to crisis management must be compatible with those of the other EU members, so that Finland can participate on equal terms in preparations and the implementation of forthcoming tasks and missions.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, it was seen that when Finland takes part in EU battle groups and operations, as well as in other multinational crisis management constellations, Finnish troops must adhere to similar rules regarding the use of force as other participating nations.

The national procedures and decision-making structures were revised so that the mobilization of a rapid response force geared to the needs of EU operations and battle groups would become possible. The EU battle group concept required a new kind of

59 Palosaari 2013.

60 The Finnish troop contribution in Concordia was 9 participants, and in Althea c. 200 participants.

61 Government Report 8/2006, Government Report 2/2007.

62 Prime Minister Vanhanen 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on Government Report 6/2004.

63 See Rauhanturvaamislain uudistamistyöryhmän mietintö 2005 [Memorandum by the working group on the amending of the peacekeeping legislation], Defence Committee Report 1/2004, Government proposal 110/2005, Government proposal 5/2006.

64 E.g. MP Lehti 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004; MP Siimes, MP Jaakonsaari, 14.9.2005, preliminary debate on Government proposal 110/2005; MP Kekkonen 21.2.2006, preliminary debate on Government proposal 5/2006.

65 Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 30; Rauhanturvaamislain uudistamistyöryhmän mietintö 2005 [Memorandum by the working group on the amending of the peacekeeping legislation].

66 Defence Committee Statement 8/2005.

67 Foreign Minister Tuomioja 21.2.2006, preliminary debate on Government proposal 5/2006; see also Government proposal 5/2006, 19–20 on the crisis management legislation of some other EU member states.

preparedness from the Defence Forces as well as more flexible national decision-making.

Pressure existed when it came to implementing the legislative and other changes due to the need to get the EU battle groups ready for deployment and for being on call at the beginning of 2007. Time was also needed for national recruitment and agreeing on the conditions of employment. External time pressures dictated the schedule of the whole legislative process from preparatory work to parliament and committee handling.<sup>68</sup>

Another issue widely discussed in the parliamentary debates on the peacekeeping legislation concerned the matter of a UN mandate, as the EU's guidelines do not require an absolute UN Security Council mandate for its operations. The necessity for a UN mandate was duly called into question in the domestic debate.

The Defence Committee saw that it might be impossible to obtain the UN Security Council's mandate for the deployment of the EU's rapid response force in every case, for instance due to the urgency of an operation or a conflict of interest between permanent members of the Security Council. Yet, it found it inconceivable that the EU would use force contrary to the principles of the UN Charter.<sup>69</sup> The Foreign Affairs Committee pointed out that the European Security Strategy and the Treaty on European Union both refer to the UN Charter. Therefore it was also seen that the EU rapid response forces support UN crisis management.<sup>70</sup> This conclusion was opposed by views according to which a UN mandate should be obtained for all EU operations because otherwise the UN's prestige and ability to function in the future would be undermined. Furthermore, it was argued that without the UN mandate, the EU's crisis management operations would erode international justice and undermine the EU's status as a promoter of justice.<sup>71</sup>

68 Prime Minister Vanhanen 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004.

69 Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 30.

70 Foreign Affairs Committee Statement 1/2006, 8.

71 E.g. MP Siimes 28.9.2004, preliminary debate on Government Report 6/2004. Initially, the President also supported keeping the UN mandate.

In the end, EU crisis management was cited as a key reason when the national restrictions on participating in international crisis management (UN mandate and limitations as to the use of force) were relinquished. The aim was to get rid of any national preconditions that would hinder Finnish participation in the EU rapid action operations and crisis management. The government referred directly to Article 42 of the UN Charter and how it could be problematic for Finnish "participation in the EU rapid action forces and the full scale of the Petersberg tasks".<sup>72</sup>

The traditional UN peacekeeping and national restrictions on the use of force were previously seen as appropriate for a neutral small state. This view has since been Europeanized: these features should be removed so that Finland can be similar to the other EU members when it comes to crisis management.<sup>73</sup> The dominant conceptualizations of peacekeeping traditions, a small state's role in peacekeeping and the self-perception of a peacekeeping superpower were now open to reinterpretation.<sup>74</sup> The meanings attached to them were no longer that fixed, and all these issues were utilized in different ways in the domestic political argumentation. They were, for instance, used both in supporting and opposing Finnish participation in EU military crisis management.

Similarly, military crisis management can be presented on the one hand as a logical continuation of Finnish peacekeeping traditions, and as a break with tradition on the other. The Defence Minister, for instance, saw the new legislation on both civil and military crisis management as a continuation of five decades of Finnish peacekeeping – traditional missions continue while civil and military crisis management offer new tools

72 Government proposal 5/2006, 23.

73 E.g. MP Nepponen 15.3.2006, debate on Government proposal 5/2006 (first reading), 14.9.2005, preliminary debate on Government proposal 110/2005.

74 For instance, MP Hakola opined that in the light of the number of Finnish international crisis management troops, Finland is no longer a peacekeeping superpower. MP Hakola, preliminary debate on Government Report 8/2010.



to respond to more demanding crises.<sup>75</sup> Consequently, participation in the development of crisis management, rapid response and the EU battle groups was seen to be compatible with Finnish peacekeeping traditions.<sup>76</sup> Yet, the Defence Committee admitted that “participation in the rapid response force is a significant change in the practical implementation of Finland’s international crisis management”.<sup>77</sup>

Similar tendencies appear in the domestic debate on the EU battle groups. Finland was on stand-by in these battle groups for a six-month period in 2007, 2008 and 2011. So far, the battle groups have not been deployed. The official view is that Finland “continues to participate in EUBGs and supports an increase in their capacity and deployability”.<sup>78</sup> In the parliamentary debate, Finnish participation in the battle groups has often been seen as a continuation of Finnish peacekeeping tradition. Nonetheless, the potential contradiction between the resources committed to EU battle groups versus UN operations has also been debated.

The question has arisen as to whether the battle groups take resources away from UN operations, especially as they have not been deployed.<sup>79</sup> The dominant view is that participation in the EU battle groups supports national defence, although conflicting opinions also surface in the debate.<sup>80</sup> The positive experiences resulting from cooperation with Nordic, non-aligned and NATO countries in the battle groups have also been highlighted in the parliamentary debate.<sup>81</sup>

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75 Defence Minister Kääriäinen 14.9.2005, preliminary debate on Government proposal 110/2005.

76 MP Lankia 20.12.2004, follow-up debate on Government Report 6/2004, MP Ollila 13.11.2007, preliminary debate on Government Report 2/2007; MP Kekkonen 21.2.2006, preliminary debate on Government proposal 5/2006.

77 Defence Committee Report 1/2004, 29.

78 Government Report 6/2012, 13.

79 MP Kallio, MP Laakso 24.11.2010, preliminary debate on Government Report 8/2010.

80 MP Korkeaoja, MP Haavisto, MP Kiljunen, Defence Minister Häkämies, MP Oinonen 24.11.2010, preliminary debate on Government Report 8/2010.

81 MP Blomqvist, MP Palm, 24.11.2010, preliminary debate on Government Report 8/2010.

**VI**  
**EUROPEANIZATION AUTOMATION**

Since Finland's accession, the Government and parliament have gained more power when it comes to foreign policy-making in the national decision-making system. According to the Constitution which entered into force in 2000, the President is responsible for traditional foreign policy in cooperation with the Government, whereas European affairs are the domain of the Government. Although drawing a clear boundary between these two might sometimes be difficult, the Constitution clearly transferred power in foreign and security policy-making from the President to the Prime Minister and the Council of State – partly because the majority of foreign policy issues can be seen to have a connection to EU affairs in one way or another.

This development was also strengthened by the termination of the Defence Council [puolustusneuvosto] in 2000 and the transfer of its main tasks to the Government's Cabinet Committee on Foreign and Security Policy. Additionally, the Prime Minister's position has been strengthened in that the EU secretariat responsible for the coordination of EU affairs has been relocated from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the Prime Minister's Office and is now called the Government Secretariat for EU Affairs.<sup>82</sup>

Nevertheless, questions relating to the division of power between the Prime Minister and the President in the European security and defence policy have remained a sensitive issue in Finnish domestic politics. EU crisis management has been a source of political disputes regarding the domestic division of power in foreign and security policy. A debated issue has concerned the way in which the national decision to deploy EU crisis management troops and battle groups should be made.

Particularly at the time of the first EU crisis management operations, there was room for interpretation as to who should decide on participation in the operations, since it was not entirely clear whether they were to be considered "foreign policy" and hence the domain of the President, or "EU affairs" belonging to the Prime Minister and

the Government.<sup>83</sup> In 2006 this resulted in a "constitutional crisis" in which parliament was divided between those supporting the President's power and those more in favour of handing all CSDP decisions over to the Prime Minister and the Government.<sup>84</sup> The deepening of European integration in the sphere of foreign and security policy was effectively turning issues that traditionally belonged to the President into "internal" EU affairs, and thus transferring them to the domain of the Prime Minister and the Government. This "Europeanization automation" demonstrates how Europeanization might result in a conflict of authority and change the power relationship between the key foreign and security policy decision-makers.

The "constitutional crisis" culminated in the Government withdrawing its first proposal for the new peacekeeping legislation (Government proposal 110/2005 for the Act on Military Crisis Management) after the Parliament's Constitutional Law Committee Statement, and planning to amend the Constitution instead.<sup>85</sup> This came as a surprise to many MPs (as well as Finnish constitutional law experts<sup>86</sup>). The new law was passed as a so-called exceptive act of permanent nature, based on Government proposal 5/2006, which stated that the President would decide on Finnish participation in operations on the basis of the Government's proposal, and the Government would hear the Parliament before making the proposal. Similarly, the President would also make the decision on placing the EU battle groups in high readiness status and sending the troops on a mission.

All in all, the Common Security and Defence Policy has been loaded with many politically contentious questions in the domestic debate, such as the preferred roles of the UN and the EU in crisis management, the interpretation of the constitution, the

82 Forsberg 2002, Tiilikainen 2007.

83 MP Sasi, Chair of the Parliament's Constitutional Law Committee 15.3.2006, debate on Government proposal 5/2006 (first reading).

84 E.g. MP Siimes, MP Räsänen 21.2.2006, preliminary debate on Government proposal 5/2006. On the jurisprudential aspects of the issue, see Niskanen 2006.

85 Prime Minister Vanhanen 1.12.2005, question time: Prime Minister's position on the Constitution.

86 Edilex 2.12.2005.

division of power, the parliamentarization of foreign and security policy, party politics, and the President's traditional position as the Commander-in-chief of the Defence Forces. Differing interpretations as to whom EU affairs and the CFSP belong have emerged during the whole Finnish EU-membership era, due in large part to the difficulties in drawing a line between foreign policy and EU affairs.<sup>87</sup> From time to time, this ambiguity has materialized as a so-called two-plate policy, or dual representation in EU summits, which means that Finland often sent both the President and the Prime Minister to European Council meetings.

All this goes to show that although European integration causes pressures for domestic structural change, it is not in a given form but, rather, gives rise to national variation – and in the Finnish case an obvious national political struggle on how the Europeanization impact is to be nationally digested and implemented.

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<sup>87</sup> E.g. MP Kankaanniemi, MP Sasi, MP Kiljunen 21.2.2006, preliminary debate on Government proposal 5/2006. Some saw this coming as early as the first year of EU membership when Government Report 1/1995 was handled in parliament and the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia were discussed. MP Ojala 20.12.1995, MP Wahlström 31.10.1995.

**CONCLUSION:**  
**DRIFTWOOD THEORY 2.0**

This paper has examined Finnish foreign and security policy from the perspective of Europeanization. As the Finnish case shows, Europeanization can occur in two directions. Firstly, there is the impact of European integration on member states, which is called national adaptation. This means that a member state makes changes in response to the demands or expectations of the EU. Secondly, the process can also take place the other way around. This is the so-called bottom-up direction, or national projection, and it concerns the impact of the member states on the EU.

The Finnish case highlighted another theoretical division that can be drawn based on the quality of Europeanization and its outcome. Thin Europeanization refers to changes in the national structures, policies, legislation or division of power. Thin Europeanization is clearly evident in the Finnish case as the structural changes and the “Europeanization automation” presented above indicate. However, the Europeanization of foreign policy can go beyond bureaucratic reorganization, constitutional change, structural adaptation and other rationalist forms of change. Indeed, the Finnish case aptly illustrated what thick Europeanization means: changes in the domestic understandings, interests and identities.<sup>88</sup> The adaptational pressure exerted by the EU has played a key role in redefining Finnish non-alignment and peacekeeping/crisis management. The small state identity has been replaced by a small member state identity – and the understanding of foreign and security policy interests has changed accordingly. The CFSP has indeed functioned as a “critical sociological force and venue that shapes perceptions” among member states.<sup>89</sup>

The (in)famous driftwood theory of Finnish foreign policy has been effectively debunked, discredited and dismissed by contemporary historians. According to this theory, Finland was portrayed as a piece of floating driftwood in the torrent of world politics, with no control over events. In the parliamentary debates from the early 1990s

to this day a common view emerges according to which Finland is no longer a solitary log or a single piece of driftwood shooting the rapids of world politics in isolation. Rather, there appears to be a common understanding that Finland is tied to a raft of logs – a European raft – floating in unison, and therefore more steadily and calmly, as the mass of the common raft cushions and softens the blows and collisions.

However, what is debated is how tightly Finland should be tied to the European raft. Should Finland remain on the outer rim, or should Finland aim to be at the centre of the raft? Moreover, does Finland possess any boat hook or pole with which to steer the raft? Or is the implication that once you are an integrated part of the raft, you can only go where it takes you?

What is also noteworthy in this new Finnish foreign policy debate is that there appears to be an ongoing trend of “post-consensus”, brought about by the simultaneous parliamentarization and Europeanization of foreign and security policy. Foreign and security policy is more openly discussed in parliament, and parliament has more say in decision-making. Furthermore, EU membership has brought with it a diversified policy agenda and new levels of decision-making. This has made the preconditions for national consensus more complicated and has resulted in diversification in the domestic discourse and a gradual fracturing of consensus.

Furthermore, the “small state identity” has begun to be increasingly interpreted as a “small member state identity”. There is a growing perception that it is in the foreign and security policy interests of a small member state to promote the EU as a strong international actor. At the same time, the understanding of a legitimate security interest of a small state that rests on purely nationally defined security interests has been challenged by a view that sees foreign and security policy interests as common and defined in common European processes. Small stateness is increasingly perceived to imply supporting the external capacity of the EU, and common European security and defence policy.

88 For a refined model of foreign policy Europeanization, see Palosaari 2011, 34–38.

89 Wong 2007, 382.

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